

CLAIMS

1-20. (canceled).

21. (currently amended) An isolated nucleic acid comprising a DNA sequence encoding an infectious RNA molecule encoding a ~~North American~~ PRRS virus, wherein said DNA sequence comprises is SEQ ID NO: 18 at its 5' end 24 ~~or a sequence that hybridizes to the complement of SEQ ID NO: 18 24 under conditions comprising hybridization to filter bound DNA in 0.5 M NaHPO₄, 7% SDS, 1 mM EDTA at 65.degree. C., and washing in 0.1.times.SSC/0.1% SDS at 68.degree. C.~~

22. (currently amended) A transfected host cell comprising a DNA sequence encoding an infectious RNA molecule encoding a ~~North American~~ PRRS virus, wherein said DNA sequence comprises is SEQ ID NO: 18 at its 5' end 24 ~~or a sequence that hybridizes to the complement of SEQ ID NO: 24 under conditions comprising hybridization to filter bound DNA in 0.5 M NaHPO₄, 7% SDS, 1 mM EDTA at 65.degree. C., and washing in 0.1.times.SSC/0.1% SDS at 68.degree. C., which transfected host cell is capable of expressing the encoded ~~North American~~ PRRS virus.~~

23. (currently amended) An isolated nucleic acid comprising a DNA sequence encoding an infectious RNA molecule encoding a ~~North American~~ PRRS virus, wherein said DNA sequence comprises is SEQ ID NO: 18 at its 5' end 24.

24. (currently amended) An isolated nucleic acid in the form of a plasmid, wherein said isolated nucleic acid comprises a DNA sequence encoding an infectious RNA molecule

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encoding a ~~North American~~ PRRS virus, wherein said DNA sequence comprises is SEQ ID NO:18 at its 5' end 24.

25. (currently amended) An isolated infectious RNA molecule encoded by an isolated nucleic acid comprising SEQ ID NO:18 at its 5' end 24, which infectious RNA molecule encodes a ~~North American~~ PRRS virus.

26. (currently amended) A recombinant ~~North American~~ PRRS virus encoded by an isolated nucleic acid comprising a DNA sequence encoding an infectious RNA molecule encoding a ~~North American~~ PRRS virus, wherein said DNA sequence comprises is SEQ ID NO:18 at its 5' end 24.

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